Oxford
Jan.y 31st 1863

Sir

I very much doubt whether any exact definition of a miracle can be given; nor do I think that definition is the proper mode of meeting the objections raised against miracles. It appears to me that the attempt to construct a definition which shall include all actually recorded as well as all imaginable miracles would do little but furnish

manner I should be disposed to treat any other instances of miracles which came before me, giving an explanation such as appeared to suit the particular case, without troubling myself about a general definition. The real question for us is not whether miracles are "violations of the laws of nature" &c &c; but simply this: Did Christ do the acts attributed to Him? and if so, what evidence do those acts furnish of His character and authority?

I am
yours very truly
H L Mansel

DSI

grounds for disputation whether all possible cases of miracle come under it or not; and if the negative could be substantiated, this would prove nothing except that the definition was faulty.

I am rather inclined to deal with the case as Dr Johnson dealt with the question "what is matter?" by stamping on the ground and saying "that is matter". It is impossible to read the record of our Lord's life and acts, without feeling

~~That~~ those acts, if truly reported, are such as no man could have done by his natural power; and instead of attempting to define a miracle in general terms, I should be content to point to one of those acts and say "that is a miracle".

If I were called upon to explain the nature of Christ's miracles, I might say that they were acts done by divine power in proof that God had sent him; and this is all that I care to know for the purpose of belief. In the same